



CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD **EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AWARD PROGRAM (EAAP)**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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The priority period for applications is April 15 to June 15. Applications that meet the eligibility requirements during that timeframe will be reviewed by a board with a criteria determined by each service branch. Those applicants will receive a letter in August or September informing them if they have been selected or not.

Applicants who apply after the June 15 priority deadline will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis as funds become available. Depending on the time of year and the number of applications already received, it could take several months before an applicant is informed if they are accepted or not. Applications close for each academic year on April 14.

ELIGIBILITY

Q: I'VE BEEN IN THE CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD FOR OVER 4 YEARS, BUT I LIVE IN NEVADA. DOES THIS AFFECT MY ELIGIBILITY FOR THE CNG EAAP?

A: Yes, only residents of California are eligible for awards. To meet residency requirements, you must have had a physical presence in California for at least one year and with the intent to make California home for other than a temporary purpose (reference the California Education Code, Sections 68000 to 68134).

Q: I SERVED 4 YEARS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD BUT HAVE ONLY BEEN IN THE CNG FOR 1 YEAR. DOES MY TIME COUNT TOWARDS THE 2-YEAR REQUIREMENT?

A: No, a CNG EAAP applicant must have a minimum of 2 years of service in the California National Guard or the California State Military Reserve. Time in other service does not count for this program.

Q: I SERVED 2 YEARS IN THE ACTIVE ARMY BUT HAVE ONLY BEEN IN THE CNG FOR 1 YEAR. DOES MY ACTIVE DUTY TIME COUNT TOWARDS THE 2-YEAR REQUIREMENT?

A: No, a CNG EAAP applicant must have a minimum of 2 years of service in the California National Guard or the California State Military Reserve. Time in other service does not count.

Q: I AM PURSUING MY MASTER'S DEGREE. CAN I USE THIS PROGRAM?

A: Yes. You can use the EAAP to obtain any certificate/diploma/degree not already held, including a doctorate's.

Q: CAN MY DEPENDANTS USE THIS PROGRAM?

A: No. This program is only for active, drilling service members.

AWARD AMOUNT

Q: DOES MY G.I. BILL OR MY FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE BENEFITS AFFECT MY AWARD?

A: The current legislation requires that the VA benefits you receive be subtracted from your cost of attendance (tuition, fees, housing, food, books, transportation, and personal expenses) as determined by your institution. The CNG EAAP can cover the remaining cost of attendance up to the maximum award amount.

Q: HOW MUCH MONEY CAN I GET EACH YEAR FOR SCHOOL?

A: The amounts are tied to maximum amounts of the Cal Grant awards for each academic year. This amount is only known once the State budget is passed for the given year.

The amounts for the 2011-2012 academic year are:

- Up to \$1,551 at Community College (per Cal Grant B)
- Up to \$12,192 at the University of California or a nonpublic institution (per Cal Grant A)
- Up to \$5,472 at the California State University (per Cal Grant A)
- Graduate studies: up to the maximum amount of Cal Grant A + \$500 for books and supplies

These amounts are divided by the number of terms your institution has. If you are attending an institution with a semester schedule, the maximum you can reach each semester is half of the yearly amount. If you are attending an institution with a quarter schedule, the maximum you can reach each quarter is a third of the yearly amount.

Q: HOW WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT?

A: You will receive an e-mail when your check is sent to your institution. The check will be written in your name. Upon receipt of the check, funds may be immediately subject to satisfying any financial holds attached to your account at the school.

Q: DOES RECEIVING AN AWARD MEAN I WILL RECEIVE A CHECK?

A: Not necessarily. If you are receiving a Cal Grant payment, you could still receive a CNG EAAP award but you would not receive an award check from the CNG EAAP. Or, if the amount you receive in VA benefits meets or exceeds your cost of attendance as determined by the institution, you would still be an awardee but would not receive an award check.

Q: CAN RECEIVING AN AWARD IMPACT MY OTHER FINANCIAL AID AWARDS?

A: Yes. It depends on the other awards you receive. If they are needs-based, the other awards may need to be reduced because the combined awards cannot exceed your cost of attendance. You should speak to your institution's financial aid office about this to avoid any problems.

EAAP OR CAL GRANT

Q: THE FORM ASKS ME TO CHOOSE THE CAL GRANT OR THE CNG EAAP. HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

A: The Cal Grant program is more exclusive than the CNG EAAP. You can find more information on the Cal Grant program at <http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=20>. It is best to ask your institution's financial aid representative as they can advise you what dollar amount you might receive through the Cal Grant. The EAAP Coordinator cannot tell you this and will not tell you which program to pick.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Q: HOW DO I COMPLETE THE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING?

A: Once you've initialed all of the boxes, filled in the information boxes, and signed the second page, you need to coordinate with your unit of assignment to have your Commander sign it prior to turning it in. In most cases, this can be done by mail, fax, scan, or in person. After obtaining your Commander's signature, the SOU needs to be sent back to Ms. Katrina Beck at Joint Forces Headquarters by e-mail or fax. (katrina.beck2@us.army.mil or fax 916-854-3739)

Q: THE FAFSA WEB SITE IS SAYING I NEED TO SUBMIT MY BILLING INFORMATION. I THOUGHT THE FAFSA WAS FREE TO FILE!

A: The FAFSA is free to complete. The FAFSA web site is www.fafsa.ed.gov/. If you reach a web site that asks for payment (such as fafsa.com), you are not at the correct web site. If you need help with applying for the FAFSA, most institutions have an enrollment officer or counselor to help walk you through it. Or, you can find many answers on the www.fafsa.ed.gov/ site under Browse Help or you can find help under Contact Us.

Q: I HAD TO REPORT MY ANNUAL INCOME ON THE FAFSA. HOW IS THIS USED?

A: While the CNG EAAP requires that you complete the FAFSA, it is a merit-based program. At no time is your annual income used or referenced for this program.

INSTITUTIONS

Q: WHERE CAN I FIND A LIST OF ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS?

A: The list is available in a drop-down box on the application. You can also check the California Student Aid Commission's web site for eligible institutions by name or location at http://sandbox.csac.ca.gov/internet/Institution_Search.asp?mode=retrieve.

Q: MY INSTITUTION IS NOT LISTED ON THE APPLICATION.

A: Institutions interested in becoming eligible for CNG EAAP must contact the California Student Aid Commission and are required to complete a Cal-Grant Institutional Participation Agreement. Service members may not request that institutions be added to the list of eligible schools nor contact the Commission on behalf of a non-eligible institution.

Q: I HAVE DECIDED TO CHANGE INSTITUTIONS STARTING SPRING (OR WINTER OR SUMMER) TERM. HOW DOES THIS IMPACT MY EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AWARD?

A: First, you will need to fill out a Record Change Request form. This can be obtained by e-mailing Ms. Katrina Beck at katrina.beck2@us.army.mil.

Secondly, it is important to note that when you are accepted into the EAAP your need eligibility is calculated based on the institution you initially put on the application. When you change your institution, the remaining need eligibility must be re-determined. Eligibility for additional funds will be contingent upon funds being available. If funds are not available (as may happen when switching from a lower costing institution to a higher costing institution), you will receive funds based on the original institution.

ABSENCES/DEPLOYMENTS

Q: I AM NOT ATTENDING FOR THE FALL/SPRING SEMESTER. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO STAY IN THE PROGRAM?

A: If you are going to miss one or more terms, you need to submit a Leave of Absence request in order to keep your spot. If you do not submit a LOA request, you will have to reapply to the program and go through the prioritizing process again. Send the request to Ms. Katrina Beck at Joint Forces Headquarters by e-mail or fax. (katrina.beck2@us.army.mil or fax 916-854-3739)

SUMMER TERM

Q: Will I receive an award check for summer sessions?

A: This question has two possible answers:

1. If you are attending an institution that requires mandatory summer sessions, you will receive money for the summer sessions. Or,
2. If you are attending an institution where summer sessions are discretionary (optional), you may receive money if there are remaining funds available. When making a decision regarding your summer attendance, remember a participant receives 400% of program eligibility based on full-time enrollment for fall and spring. Eligibility is used for each term the participant attends and the amount of usage is determined by the institution's type of term (quarter or semester) and your attendance status. This means you may not have enough to fully cover your fourth year.

REMAINING IN THE PROGRAM

Q: UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES COULD I BE REMOVED FROM THE PROGRAM?

A: Awardees could be removed at any time if they do not continue to meet the requirements. Removal could occur if you:

- Left or lost status as an active member of the CNG or SMR
- Lost status of California residency
- Switched to an ineligible institution
- Did not maintain 3 units for the term
- Did not maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher
- Did not attend a required term and failed to submit a Leave of Absence request
- You used up all of the 400% eligibility
- Falsifying or misrepresenting data

Q: WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO CONTINUE IN THE PROGRAM THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR?

A: Awardees need to submit a renewal application and renewal Statement of Understanding for each academic year (until their eligibility is exhausted or they become disqualified). Renewals will be accepted from January 15 to June 1. Awardees who have not submit their renewal application and renewal Statement of Understanding will be permanently withdrawn from the program.